

SELL! SELL! SELL!

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS

Open season now.

LONG-TERM CARE

What's long-term care? It's the kind of care you would need to help you perform daily activities if you had an ongoing illness or disability, including Alzheimer's disease. It's help with eating, bathing, dressing

... the kind of chronic care commonly associated with a nursing home. Now, the Office of Personnel Management is sponsoring a new Federal Long Term Care (LTC) Insurance Program available to

postal employees. LTC Open Season ends Dec. 31, 2002. For more information, call 800-LTC-FEDS (800-582-3337) or check the websites www.ltcfeds.com or www.opm.gov/insure/ltc.

THRIFT SAVINGS PLAN

Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) Open Season is Oct. 15 through 5 p.m. Central Time on Dec. 31, 2002. Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) employees may elect to contribute up to 13 percent of the basic pay they earn each pay period to the TSP. Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) employees may elect to contribute up to 8 percent of the basic pay they earn each pay period. For calendar year 2003, the annual contributions may not exceed the IRS deferral limit of \$12,000. Eligible

career employees will receive a TSP leaflet and TSP PostalEASE worksheet in the mail this month. Employees who wish to make a TSP Open Season contribution election must call PostalEASE toll free at 877-4PS-EASE (877-477-3273) during TSP Open Season. Callers will need their Social Security number and USPS personal identification number (PIN). Employees who are unable to use PostalEase to complete their elections should contact their local

personnel office prior to Dec. 31 for assistance.

For TSP fund investment elections, which can be done anytime, employees have three methods available to make an election: by using their TSP (not USPS) PIN on the TSP website at www.tsp.gov or the TSP ThriftLine at 504-255-8777, or by mailing form TSP-50, Investment Allocation, available from the local personnel office, to the TSP Service Office in New Orleans.

Open seasons to come.

FLEXIBLE SPENDING ACCOUNTS

Flexible Spending Accounts (FSA) Open Season is Nov. 11 through 5 p.m. Central Time on Dec. 22, 2002. The typical participant in the Health Care FSA saves about \$600 on health care expenses. For the Dependent Care FSA, the typical savings is about \$1,000 on dependent care (day care) expenses. With the Health Care FSA, you can be reimbursed for whatever insurance doesn't cover for health care items or services such as doctor, chiropractor and dentist visits; braces; glasses, contacts and eye exams; and prescription drugs. With the Dependent Care FSA, you can be reimbursed for sending your child to a day care center, nursery school or summer camp, or even for day care

for a dependent adult, if these are expenses you have because you're working.

When you sign up for an FSA, you have a regular deduction from your paycheck, but it's tax-free. For example, if you sign up for a \$1,300 Health Care FSA, you would contribute \$50 from each paycheck but your net pay would only go down by about \$30. And you would have the full \$1,300 available beginning in January 2003. If you and your family had doctor visits in January, and had to pay a \$200 deductible, you would just mail or FAX a claim form with proof of your expenses to the FSA Customer Service Center, and you'd receive \$200 back. Your actual savings will depend upon what you

contribute and your federal and state tax rates. You'll receive a brochure in the mail with all the details during FSA Open Season.

If you have any questions about how an FSA could work for you, just call the FSA Customer Service Center at 800-842-2026. Employees who wish to make an FSA Open Season contribution election must call PostalEASE toll free at 877-4PS-EASE (877-477-3273) during FSA Open Season. Callers will need their Social Security number and USPS personal identification number (PIN). Employees who are unable to use PostalEase to complete their elections should contact their local personnel office prior to Dec. 22 for assistance.

FEDERAL EMPLOYEES HEALTH BENEFITS

The Federal Employees Health Benefit (FEHB) Program Open Season is Nov. 11 through Dec. 9, 2002. Employees will be receiving new FEHB guides with available plan information at their address of record in late October or early November.

During FEHB Open Season, employees have the opportunity to enroll in an FEHB plan, if eligible and not currently enrolled; to change from one plan to another plan; to change from one option to another option; to change from self-only to

self-and-family, or vice versa; to change from pre-tax to post-tax premium deductions, or vice versa; or to cancel an FEHB enrollment. Any new enrollments or changes made during this FEHB Open Season will take effect Jan. 11, 2003.

ANNUAL LEAVE EXCHANGE

The Annual Leave Exchange (ALE) Program Open Season is Nov. 15 through midnight Central Time on Dec. 15, 2002. ALE provides an option for eligible employees to receive a lump sum payment in exchange for a portion of the annual leave that would otherwise be advanced at the beginning of the 2003 leave year. Annual leave

earned and accumulated through the 2002 leave year, which ends Jan. 11, 2003, cannot be exchanged for cash. Payment under ALE will be a lump sum calculated on the employee's base salary as of the first day of the 2003 leave year (Jan. 11, 2003). Paychecks dated Jan. 31, 2003, will include the 2003 lump sum payment. Employees who wish to exchange

leave must call PostalEASE toll free at 877-4PS-EASE (877-477-3273) during ALE Open Season. Callers will need their Social Security number and USPS personal identification number (PIN). Employees who are unable to use PostalEase to complete their elections should contact their local personnel office prior to Dec. 15 for assistance.

Using PostalEASE? You'll need a PIN

You'll need to use PostalEASE for the Flexible Spending Accounts, Thrift Savings Plan, and Annual Leave Exchange open seasons. Don't know your USPS personal identification

number (PIN)? Just call PostalEASE toll-free at 877-4PS-EASE (877-477-3273). Next prompt — press 1 for PostalEASE. When prompted, enter your Social Security number. When

prompted to enter your PIN, pause, and then press 2. Your USPS PIN will be mailed to your address of record (allow 10 days).

Get fired up about revenue!

Do one thing to help grow USPS revenue lately? Talked up Express Mail to your neighbors? How about Priority Mail? And have you shown someone how to buy stamps online? It's easier than ever to do business with the Postal Service. And speaking of service, we hit a few home runs last year with First-Class Mail, Priority Mail and Express Mail performance. We've got a good story-- but we have to tell it. After all, if we don't talk up our products and services, who will?

■ Let's talk about access. We've got plenty. More than any hamburger joint on the planet. And we're going to tell the world about it. Beginning this month, you'll be seeing "Buy Stamps Here" decals at 60,000 ATMs, supermarkets, drug stores and other locations where our customers can buy stamps. That's in addition to the 38,000 postal retail locations that sell stamps. But there's more. Stamps are as close as your computer-- and you can order them 24/7 at The Postal Store. It's on our website, at www.usps.com. Just click on "Buy Stamps and More." Seen our new commercial yet? It tells the whole story.

■ Stamps are just the beginning. Gotta do something with 'em, right? How about putting them on a Priority Mail or Express Mail package? They're both great products at great prices. And we don't tack on surcharges. We don't make you pay more because we're delivering to your home and not your business. We don't make you pay more because you have a rural address. Bottom line? Good buy. Great service. And if we don't talk about it, no one will know about it.

■ Need Special Services with that package or letter? Not a problem. We got you covered. You can insure it. Confirm it. Certify it. Register it. You can send it COD to a POB. That's Post Office Box, for short. If you need one of those, we've got them, too.

■ You can't forget about the new DMM 100, either. It's takes the mystery out of the mail. We offer a w-i-d-e range of products and services. And the DMM 100 -- Customer's Guide to Mailing -- explains them like never before. Simple. Clear. Easy to understand. It's even got pictures. So when customers have a question about what product or service is best for their needs, the DMM 100 has the answer -- fast! Seven million people come into postal retail units every day. That's seven million buying decisions. And we get to influence each one. So, if we play it right, it's also seven million happy customers. Let them know about the DMM 100. Or you can use it yourself as a refresher. Either way, when we make it easy for customers to do business with us, they will.

A big job? You bet. Nobody said transforming would be easy. But it will be worth it. For the Postal Service and for the people we serve. Growth equals revenue equals protecting affordable, universal service. Remember, growth is kinetic. It won't happen if we don't make it happen. Revenue moves when we do. So repeat after me, "Sell! Sell! Sell!"

USPS NEWS HARDCOPY

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Injuries are the pits

Just because you tool around in your family 4x4 with relative ease, not all trucks are born alike. Powered Industrial Trucks -- or PIT -- are a different kind of horsepower and you'll find them at many postal facilities. These trucks are used to carry, push, pull, lift, stack or tier materials. They include forklifts, pallet lifts, platform lift trucks and tractors. (Earth-moving and over-the-road haulage trucks are

not PIT.) USPS employees who operate PIT must receiving training, and an evaluation of each PIT operator's performance must be conducted at least once every three years.

Remember, it's the responsibility of all employees to comply with postal safety rules and practices. Be safety conscious.

INDUSTRYWATCH

Mail-order movies

Wal-Mart is testing a new DVD subscription-rental program, reports *The New York Times*. The service is similar to that offered by Netflix, the pioneer of online DVD subscription rentals. Customers pay a fixed monthly fee and receive by U.S. mail a limited number of DVDs for as long as they want with no due dates, late fees or postal charges.

FedEx faring well

The New York Times writes that FedEx has partially insulated itself from the vagaries of the national economy. "FedEx is not immune to the threat of recession," *The Times* says. "Still, a range of analysts and investors say they believe that FedEx's fundamentals are sound." FedEx's move into ground transportation has been a big part of that. FedEx CEO Fed Smith told *The Times*, "We finally realized that if we wanted to grow, we had to get into surface transportation." The article also cites FedEx's seven-year USPS contract as a solid piece of business.

FedEx moves to simplify returns

Traffic World and *DM NEWS* report that FedEx is simplifying the returns process for catalog and online retailers. When a customer returns a purchase, explain the reports, the service identifies a consolidation point and after three days, the consolidated returns are sent in a single shipment to the retailer.

DHL to roll out ground service

The Journal of Commerce reported that Deutsche Post World Net affiliate DHL Worldwide Express plans to roll out a U.S. ground service early next year. DHL is testing a new ground service with full launch scheduled for the first quarter of 2003. The service will position Deutsche Post World Net to compete head-to-head with archrivals FedEx Corp. and United Parcel Service, the *Journal* says.

QUOTABLE

"We are not waiting for change to come to us"

PMG Jack Potter

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